



**RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**Office of Marketing and Communications**  
**Press Release**  
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## **Ramapo College Celebrates Graduate Commencement**

MAHWAH, N.J. -- Ramapo College celebrated its Graduate Programs Commencement during a separate ceremony in the Bill Bradley Center on campus on May 23. Hundreds of family members and friends packed the Arena to cheer on the 246 graduates, including five veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces, who received their master's degree in the College's seven graduate programs.

Perliza D. Emde carried the Master's Programs gonfalon to mark the beginning of the ceremony. Perliza, a registered nurse in both New Jersey and New York, received her Master in Family Nurse Practice (FNP) and was instrumental in getting the College's FNP program accredited.

In his address, President Mercer remarked, "Cast your mind back and ask yourself whether 15 years ago you would have imagined sitting here today. Yet you are—through a combination of skill, drive, adaptability and serendipity, you took advantage of what came your way. And you will do so again, aided by a Ramapo education that has given you formidable skills that enable you to analyze and solve problems across a broad societal range. You should be confidently hopeful as you gaze forward."

The Honorable Loretta Weinberg, Senate Majority Leader District 37, was presented with an honorary degree.

"You all are coming of age when we understand that our goals and aspirations shouldn't take a back seat to anything," Senator Weinberg began, revealing that years ago she completed her course work for her master's degree but never went back to present her thesis. "Today you are the gifted and the educated. Take a moment to appreciate how truly privileged and fortunate you are to receive an advanced degree from Ramapo College, a renowned liberal arts college that fosters international education and intercultural understanding.

"Take a moment to reflect on the hard work you put in to get here. Despite all the odds and whatever life threw your way, you made it. You have become a greater version of yourself."

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Ramapo College of New Jersey is the state's premier public liberal arts college and is committed to academic excellence through interdisciplinary and experiential learning, and international and intercultural understanding. The College is ranked #1 among New Jersey public institutions by College Choice, and is recognized as a top college by *U.S. News & World Report*, *Kiplinger's*, Princeton Review and *Money* magazine, among others. Ramapo College

is also distinguished as a Career Development College of Distinction by CollegesofDistinction.com, boasts the best campus housing in New Jersey on Niche.com, and is designated a “Military Friendly College” in Victoria Media’s *Guide to Military Friendly Schools*.

Established in 1969, Ramapo College offers bachelor’s degrees in the arts, business, humanities, social sciences and the sciences, as well as in professional studies, which include business, education, nursing and social work. In addition, the College offers courses leading to teacher certification at the elementary and secondary levels, and offers graduate programs leading to master’s degrees in Accounting, Business Administration, Educational Technology, Educational Leadership, Nursing, Social Work and Special Education.